

# **City of Concord Recreation and Park Advisory Committee**

## **Meeting Minutes from December 21, 2006 Held at COMF**

Attendance:

**Committee Members:** Janet Schofield, Liz Odell, Chiara Dolcino, John Mercier, Cheryl Bourassa, Andrea Goldberg, Candace White-Bouchard, Councilor Jim Bouley, Councilor Keith Nyhan and Bill Haubrich

**Staff Members:**

David Gill – Recreation Department, Carolyn Tracy – Recreation Department, Chris Jacques – General Services, and Doug Woodward – Community Development

Meeting called to order by Candace at 5 pm

**Terrill Park**

Chris Jacques updated the group on the clean up of the Park. Chris and Major Duval from Concord Police Department developed a plan to clean up Terrill Park to allow better line of site for Police Patrols. Several members mentioned the park looks 100% better and appreciated the hard work done by staff. Chris also mentioned they have also changed the park hours to open 30 minutes before sunrise and 30 after sunset. Carolyn mentioned the new hours will take affect when the new signs are ready. She thinks they should be ready this week or next. Candace mentioned the Dog Park Group has raised \$14,000 of their goal of \$18,000 and thought the cleaning up of Terrill Park is helping raise awareness and money. She mentioned one Girl Scout Group collected over \$1600 for a merit badge.

**Russ Martin Little League Softball Field**

Carolyn updated the group on the history of the field and highlighted the action taken by City Council in Fall 2005. Several members asked about the status of the proposed new field and Carolyn said this new lease only included the existing field. Chiara asked if it also included the concession stand and will they do a survey of what is there? There was a short discussion on what the new lease includes: existing field, concession stand. The softball group will be responsible for all maintenance. John made the motion to recommend the City Manager enter into the new 30 year lease with the organization, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Andrea. Passed unanimously.

**White Park Skate House and Park Improvements**

Carolyn updated the committee on the Skate House. Cuts in last years budget in the Recreation and General Services eliminated the operation of the Skate House. The Friends of White Park has given the City \$1000 to keep the building open on weekends and help with start up costs (cleaning). Carolyn also mentioned just this week the Friends arranged for all our rental skates to be sharpened and laces replaced as needed. S&W Sports volunteered to do this at no charge. There will be rentals on weekends – weather permitting – we just need cold weather! Keith asked why we flood the pond. Chris reviewed process and reasons why.

Jim expressed his concern as a City Councilor in regards to last years budget related to the Skate House. He was told last year the building was condemned and now it is safe. City Council acts upon recommendations based on information presented and he feels mislead. Carolyn mentioned she was aware of a mold issue last year before the season started and that General Services cleaned the building before opening. She was not informed the building was closing until the final budget was released. Everyone was very happy with the Friends of White Park donation to keep the Skate House Open.

Carolyn also mentioned the White Park RFQ for the ball field and parking lot improvements should go out early winter with construction beginning late summer or early fall. David and Chris will meet to find location for soccer fields for the fall as we will loose the use of White Park which has three fields.

Also the City is looking for a member of RPAC to help review proposals. John volunteered to help review as long as the meetings are at night. Carolyn thought the meetings will most likely be during the day. John cannot do day meetings due to work. Janet then said she would be happy to serve.

## **Revenue Sub Committee**

Candace updated the committee. Currently the Recreation Department brings in slightly over 60% of their expenses. She mentioned the sub committee did ask what the expenses are for buildings and field maintenance but did not have the financial breakdown. Chris mentioned he had sent a list to Carolyn several months ago on costs per park however with the current computer system cannot breakdown expenses per field. He will come up with a ball park figures for the fields and have them to her before the next meeting on the Jan 18 and will forward the message to other divisions and to Chip Chesley. The sub committee is very concerned about the free use of fields by other schools i.e. Bishop Brady and Merrimack Valley School District uses city fields at no cost. Candace also mentioned the sub committee also looked at the current refund policy and recommended changes to it. She will send out actual wording on possible new refund policy in early January.

Keith asked is there an opportunity to look at running the adult sport leagues that use City Facilities i.e. softball, men's basketball. Candace mentioned the group did talk about this but does not recommend at this time, as we do not know what the actual expenses are for the facilities. The question that needs to be answered is: are current fees covering expenses and what % should they cover? Keith also asked what happens if a softball team cancels a game due to weather - do they still pay for the location. Carolyn highlighted how the system currently works. If a group calls in and cancels due to weather they do not get charged.

Jim asked is it possible to get actual expenses per field, gym, community center to help look at what the actual facilities expenses are. Chris said he can research his costs but does not have control over Public Properties Budget. Candace asked would it help if RPAC sent a letter to the City asking for this information. Short discussion. The group strongly encourages City Staff (Recreation, Grounds and Public Properties) to get together and develop actual expenses for recreation facilities: community centers and playing fields as soon as possible.

## **New Business not on Agenda**

Jim briefly talked about the possible Artificial Turf at Memorial Field which is currently in the 2010 CIP Budget with the Concord School District paying 50% of expected \$600,000 cost. The school has yet to respond to this concept. The committee agrees there is a need for the Artificial Turf as it would allow more uses by different sports on the field. Candace asked Jim if he is looking at moving this CIP project up to FY08 or FY09. He said at this time he is not, as there are still many questions to answer. What are the funding possibilities (city/school/private/booster clubs). Jim stated that the new field could accommodate many more users and thus generate more revenue. The committee recommends looking at new projected revenue.

Jim also highlighted the FY08 CIP Process and asked the Committee if they would like to review the proposed CIP like they did last year. The committee agreed they would. Candace asked if we can email the group the Projects. David was not sure we could send out individual projects but will look into it. Jim mentioned the entire budget is online and that we can just maybe send a link out to the group pointing them to the budget. David said he will take care of it. Jim mentioned the deadline for CIP for FY 08 is January 19, one day after our next meeting. We may want to meet before the 18<sup>th</sup>.

Meeting adjured at 6:15 pm

Respectfully submitted by;  
David Gill, Recreation Supervisor